

Section A-1

Commander's Focus

The contents of this Toolkit have been developed to assist you in your efforts to support family readiness. Every effort has been made to ensure that the information provided is current and accurate. However, because statutory and regulatory changes may have occurred since the publication of this Toolkit, the Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Reserve Affairs cannot assume responsibility for its continued accuracy. Before taking any significant action based on the contents of this Toolkit, you should contact a subject matter expert in your chain of command to secure the most current information.

Commander's Focus

Post-Deployment and Reunion

Returning from a deployment and reunion with families are emotionally charged events. Disseminating the redeployment plan to the home station unit, family readiness program and family members in a timely manner is key. Redeployments are difficult to plan because the time schedule is affected by so many variables such as weather, available aircraft, time delays, equipment problems, and personnel issues. You should provide a window of time when the unit will be arriving home rather than a specific time.

- Keep the information flowing.
- Keep the unit and family readiness program personnel continually informed. They are the conduits of information to the family members.
- Update the web site and send out e-mail messages.
- Stay calm and make every effort to provide current, factual information in as timely a manner as possible.

Emotions run high and family members can become quite upset when the redeployment time schedule changes. Encourage families to bring coats, snacks, and other accessories to keep the children safe and happy. Delays are common in redeployments.

The media is often a part of the welcome home festivities interviewing service members and family members. Be prepared. Working with the media is addressed in TAB A-4 of this Toolkit.

Establish a redeployment plan and if possible a “welcome home” ceremony. Encourage support and assistance from the family members in the planning and carrying out of the ceremony. A sample redeployment plan is provided on the next page.

There are specific issues that a commander should consider when the unit is returning from a lengthy deployment. Commanders should provide redeploying service members an opportunity to “decompress.” Make available briefings and support services from unit chaplains, family readiness program personnel, and community resources on reunion issues.

Reuniting families after a separation may be stressful. It is common to feel stress and tension. Routines have changed. Roles have changed. Family members may unconsciously set unrealistic and high expectations. The reunion process takes time. Reunions with family members will be covered more in depth in the Family Member TAB, Section C-2. As a commander, your leadership, guidance, and compassion are invaluable during the pre-deployment, deployment, and reunion process.

Sample Redeployment Plan

Purpose: This ceremony is designed to recognize and welcome home the members of ____ unit that have been deployed to _____. We will do this by bringing family members, peers, and superiors together to welcome them with a first class event at _____ immediately upon the return from deployment.

Concept: After the service members land at _____ they will disembark the aircraft/ship and hold a formation. Music will be provided by _____. The Commander/Flag Officer will welcome the members' back and speak to the attendees. The members will then have _____ minutes to greet their spouses, families, and friends. The members will then fall back into formation, account for all sensitive items, load transportation, and move back to the unit area. Once all weapons and equipment are accounted for, the service members will be released.

** The unit area should remain clear of family and friends to expedite their release.

Redeployment Location:

Access:

Directions:

Tentative Arrival Date/Times: